



Submission  
No 23

Our Reference: [1558/RSz]

The Committee Manager  
NSW Standing Committee on Public Works  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

10 August 2006

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **INQUIRY INTO SPORTSGROUND MANAGEMENT IN NSW**

I refer to your letter dated 07 July 2006 regarding an inquiry into Sportsground Management in New South Wales and requesting submissions relating to this matter.

Below are Council's views in relation to the key issues to be examined at the inquiry:

- **Adequacy of Provision of Sportsgrounds in Key Demand Areas**

The planning and provision of sporting facilities is based around a combination of criteria which include:

- Reference to the Wollondilly Shire Council's Supporting Communities - A Plan for Community and Recreation Facilities for Wollondilly by 2010
- Population statistics (current and forecasted trends)
- Through inclusion in and implementation of Council's Local Environment, Subdivision and Development Control Plans
- Sporting Club/ Association and Sportsground Management Committee representations and submissions
- Councillor initiatives

Council is currently preparing a Recreational Needs Study which will incorporate the above points to provide a streamlined approach towards planning and providing sport and recreational facilities within the Shire.

- **Current Requirement for Updating and Refurbishment of Sportsgrounds and Supporting Infrastructure**

Council's current financial position offers a limited budget for capital works and major improvements. Generally, only items requiring urgent maintenance and repairs such as plumbing, electrical and access issues as well as any items compromising safety are immediately attended to. There is also an annual Sportsground rejuvenation program which incorporates top dressing, aerating and fertilising.

General maintenance including grass cutting, tree maintenance, cleaning of building facilities and surrounds are undertaken as standard protocol.

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Although major items such as lighting for sportsgrounds, provision or refurbishment of amenities buildings and car parks are the responsibility of Council, due to the financial limitations, Council encourages Sports Clubs and Sportsground Management Committees to seek external funding through Departments such as NSW Sport & Recreation to fund these projects.

Council does undertake regular audits on all its sport and recreation facilities including the condition of grounds, buildings, picnic facilities, playgrounds and car parks.

- **Appropriateness and Fairness of Council Pricing Principles for Facilities**

Council's Fees and Charges structure is set up in various categories with differing fees for Casual Hires, Permanent Hirers, Community Groups, Schools and for different types of usage. A list of Fees and Charges for 2006/07 is attached.

Due to the seasonal crossover of sports (Summer to Winter Season and Winter to Summer Season), there is very limited, if any, opportunity to undertake major rejuvenation of Sportsgrounds.

Council does however undertake rejuvenation work on some of its Sportsgrounds annually (primarily following the Winter Season due to the heavier impact the grounds receive). In order to keep most of the Sportsgrounds open for sport throughout the entire year, the grounds are generally rejuvenated on a rotational basis every two to three years, and are assessed annually as to their necessity for maintenance work.

All grounds have soil and compaction tests undertaken annually to determine which grounds require higher priority maintenance. At times, some grounds do undergo annual maintenance.

The grounds usually remain open for rejuvenation works (depending on the level of work undertaken), although few weeks use free period is encouraged. The main works undertaken include top dressing, aerating and fertilising.

- **Environmental Issues, Including Water Conservation and Grounds Maintenance**

At this stage, Council has not limited the usage of Sportsgrounds as a result of overuse or water restrictions, despite the grounds receiving additional wear and tear.

The restricted water usage has impacted on the quality of the grounds with irrigation only permitted for a three hour period on Monday mornings and Monday evenings each week. Similarly, the increased usage of grounds due to swelling team number at most clubs of a wide range of sports has affected the quality of playing surface.

To this date, Council has not been in a position where grounds have been shut due to an unplayable field resulting from over use or the drought conditions. This is complimented by Council's maintenance schedules and rejuvenation program.

In some locations, Council has begun planning and even implementing alternate irrigation methods such as the construction of Bores. Due to Council's limited funds for such infrastructure, financial support for these projects is sought by Clubs and Committees with assistance from grant funding.

- **Residential Amenity, Public Liability and Security Issues**

Residential amenity is not a major concern for Council. There are some internal traffic and pedestrian issues (within the Sportsgrounds) at some locations, primarily due to the layout and design of fields and car park areas. These are generally addressed upon notification to Council by the provision of traffic calming devices or the provision of alternate parking areas.

Any permanent hirer (seasonal allocation) of Council's sporting facilities needs to be covered for public liability for a minimum of \$10million, endorsed to indemnify Council against any accident, injury, or damage resulting from or incidental to the hirer's use of Council property or facility.

Any casual or one-off hirer is encouraged to provide their own public liability, however, should that not be available, they are required to pay a contribution to be covered by Council's public liability.

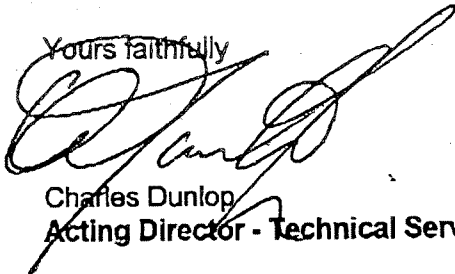
Security concerns for all of Council's facilities are prevalent across the Shire but are relatively limited on the Sportsgrounds themselves. The main incidences of damage to playing surfaces result from unauthorised motor vehicles gaining access onto the fields and glass from broken bottles.

Damage to Sportsgrounds is addressed as a high priority to enable the playing field to be restored to a safe training and playing order as soon as possible.

Council is encouraged by the Standing Committee's quest in undertaking an inquiry into Sportsground Management and welcomes the findings upon the conclusion of the subsequent hearings.

Should you require any additional information regarding this submission, please contact Council's Facilities & Recreation Planner, Mr Robert Szoszkiewicz on 4677 8275 or at [robert.szoszkiewicz@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](mailto:robert.szoszkiewicz@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au).

Yours faithfully



Charles Dunlop  
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